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APPLICATION NO.	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.	CONFIRMATION NO.
08/987,380	12/09/1997	MASAO INOUE	Q48500	6198

7590 11/05/2002

SUGHRUE MION ZINN MACPEAK & SEAS
2100 PENNSYLVANIA AVENUE NW
WASHINGTON, DC 200373202

EXAMINER

WANG, SHENGJUN

ART UNIT	PAPER NUMBER
1617	

DATE MAILED: 11/05/2002

LC

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

Office Action Summary	Application No.	Applicant(s)
	08/987,380	INOUE ET AL.
	Examiner	Art Unit
	Shengjun Wang	1617

-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --

Period for Reply

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If the period for reply specified above is less than thirty (30) days, a reply within the statutory minimum of thirty (30) days will be considered timely.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133).
- Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

Status

1) Responsive to communication(s) filed on 07 August 2002.

2a) This action is **FINAL**. 2b) This action is non-final.

3) Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

Disposition of Claims

4) Claim(s) 1-3,5-7,10,11,13 and 16-18 is/are pending in the application.

4a) Of the above claim(s) 16-18 is/are withdrawn from consideration.

5) Claim(s) _____ is/are allowed.

6) Claim(s) 1-3,5-7,10,11,13 is/are rejected.

7) Claim(s) _____ is/are objected to.

8) Claim(s) _____ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

Application Papers

9) The specification is objected to by the Examiner.

10) The drawing(s) filed on _____ is/are: a) accepted or b) objected to by the Examiner.

Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).

11) The proposed drawing correction filed on _____ is: a) approved b) disapproved by the Examiner.

If approved, corrected drawings are required in reply to this Office action.

12) The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner.

Priority under 35 U.S.C. §§ 119 and 120

13) Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).

a) All b) Some * c) None of:

- Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
- Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. _____.
- Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).

* See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.

14) Acknowledgment is made of a claim for domestic priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(e) (to a provisional application).

a) The translation of the foreign language provisional application has been received.

15) Acknowledgment is made of a claim for domestic priority under 35 U.S.C. §§ 120 and/or 121.

Attachment(s)

1) Notice of References Cited (PTO-892)

2) Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948)

3) Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO-1449) Paper No(s) _____.

4) Interview Summary (PTO-413) Paper No(s) _____.

5) Notice of Informal Patent Application (PTO-152)

6) Other: _____.

DETAILED ACTION

Receipt of applicants' remarks submitted August 14, 2002 is acknowledged.

Claims Rejections 35 U.S.C. - 103

1. The following is a quotation of 35 U.S.C. 103(a) which forms the basis for all obviousness rejections set forth in this Office action:

(a) A patent may not be obtained though the invention is not identically disclosed or described as set forth in section 102 of this title, if the differences between the subject matter sought to be patented and the prior art are such that the subject matter as a whole would have been obvious at the time the invention was made to a person having ordinary skill in the art to which said subject matter pertains. Patentability shall not be negated by the manner in which the invention was made.

Claims 1-3, 5 -7, 10, 11 and 13 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Tocker (WO 91/10362 of record) in view of Burger et al. (Derwent Abstract, Derwent – ACC-No. 1993-067839 of record) and Kogler et al. (US Patent 4,772,490) for reasons set forth in the prior office action.

Response to the Arguments

Applicants' arguments submitted August 7, 2002 have been fully considered, but are not persuasive for reasons discussed below.

2. In response to applicant's arguments against the references individually, one cannot show nonobviousness by attacking references individually where the rejections are based on combinations of references. See *In re Keller*, 642 F.2d 413, 208 USPQ 871 (CCPA 1981); *In re Merck & Co.*, 800 F.2d 1091, 231 USPQ 375 (Fed. Cir. 1986). In the instant case, the primary reference (Tocker) teach that employment of polyurethane as coating on agrochemicals granules for control releasing is known, the second references teach the particular method of coating herein is known in the art for many advantages in controlled releasing. Thus, it is *prima facie*

obvious for one of ordinary skill in the art, to use the particular method herein for its advantage.

Note, the ultimate functions of the coating in the references are the same, i.e., controlled release of active ingredients in the same environments.

3. Further, the claimed invention is not patentably distinct from the prior art in that the core may contain any other ingredients, including polyol, besides the active ingredients and solid carrier. See the claims herein.

4. Regarding claims 5, 7, 10,11 and 13, which recited water absorption ratio of the polyurethane, is not more than 5%, it is noted that the claims are with an additional functional limitation. Applicants simply asserted that the cited references do not teach expressly the functional limitation herein, fails to address the examiner's arguments: "the polyurethane coating of Tocker is reasonably expected to have the same water absorption ratio as claimed herein," or "the optimization the properties of the coating accordingly by using different isocyanate or polyol is considered within the skill of artisan, as discussed by Tocker et al. (cross link degree) and Kolger et al. (different polyol and isocyanate)." Particularly, applicants fail to explain why the coatings in the references do have the water absorption greater than 5%, or the criticality of this functional limitation.

5. **THIS ACTION IS MADE FINAL.** Applicant is reminded of the extension of time policy as set forth in 37 CFR 1.136(a).

A shortened statutory period for reply to this final action is set to expire THREE MONTHS from the mailing date of this action. In the event a first reply is filed within TWO MONTHS of the mailing date of this final action and the advisory action is not mailed until after the end of the THREE-MONTH shortened statutory period, then the shortened statutory period

will expire on the date the advisory action is mailed, and any extension fee pursuant to 37 CFR 1.136(a) will be calculated from the mailing date of the advisory action. In no event, however, will the statutory period for reply expire later than SIX MONTHS from the mailing date of this final action.

Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to Shengjun Wang, Ph.D. whose telephone number is (703) 308-4554. The examiner can normally be reached on Monday-Friday from 8:30 to 5:00.

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Sreeni Padmanabhan, can be reached on (703) 305-1877. The fax phone number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is (703) 308-4556.

Any inquiry of a general nature or relating to the status of this application or proceeding should be directed to the receptionist whose telephone number is (703) 308-1235.

Examiner



Shengjun Wang

October 29, 2002

RJW
RUSSELL TRAVERS
PRIMARY EXAMINER
GROUP 1200